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ABSTRACT

To participate in the state grant program of the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), Connecticut is required to prepare a Five-Year State Plan. This plan establishes goals and objectives for the State consistent with the purposes of LSTA, describes the activities that will meet those goals and describes the procedures that have and will be used to involve libraries and users throughout the state. It also presents the procedures the State Library will use to administer the program and evaluate the success of Connecticut's LSTA activities. Followed by an introduction, objectives and activities are described for the following LSTA goals: (1) Provide the citizens of Connecticut access to information and education resources through a statewide library network; (2) Ensure all children in Connecticut have access to quality library services; (3) Improve the ability of library personnel, trustees and related groups to provide excellent library service to the citizens of Connecticut; (4) Enhance access to library services for individuals having difficulty using the library; and (5) Improve access to quality library materials, services or programs for populations in economically distressed or culturally diverse communities. The Library Services and Technology Act Task Force members are listed. (AEF)

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Five-Year Plan

Library Services and Technology Act

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Connecticut State Library

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Five-Year Plan

Library Services And Technology Act

Introduction

Where we are

The Connecticut Five-Year State Plan for Library Services funded under the new Library Services and Technology Act seeks to build upon the solid history of library planning, cooperation and innovation that dates back to 1962, when Governor John Dempsey created the Governor's Committee on Libraries. That committee established a foundation for subsequent initiatives by analyzing demographic and economic factors affecting the state and identifying segments of the population not adequately reached by library services.

In 1971, the State Library and the Connecticut Library Association worked together to initiate "Target 76", one of the most far reaching and successful long-range planning projects in the state. Three of the major programs that evolved from "Target 76" are still functioning in their original form:

Connecticard: a resource sharing program that allows any state resident to borrow books and other materials from any of the 192 participating public libraries in the state.

Connecticar: a statewide pickup and delivery system that services 265 libraries, makes 630 stops each week, and carries more than one million items annually.

Cooperating Library Service Units (CLSU): a system of regional multi-type library support agencies. The CLSU's are member organizations open to libraries of all types within each of the four geographical CLSU regions that cover the entire state. Their purpose is "to improve library service through coordinated planning, resource sharing, and the development of programs too costly or impractical for a single library to maintain."

Authority to operate these programs has been incorporated into the state's general statutes, and funding for the CLSU's in the State Library's annual budget has been mandated since 1975. Since their founding, the CLSU's have been a strong voice in library planning and development and a partner of the State Library in creating and nourishing innovative library cooperative activities.

"Towards the Year 2000" was another major statewide planning effort. At a two-day retreat held in the spring of 1983, participants representing all types of library interests met to determine the goals and objectives for the future direction of library development. Task forces addressed issues dealing with citizen information needs, service measures, resource sharing and service to target groups. Among the products of "Toward the Year 2000" was "Building Toward Excellence", the state's LSCA long-range plan for 1985-1990.

In 1988, Public Act 88-216 gave the State Library the authority to combine the functions and responsibilities of the Interagency Library Planning Committee, the CLSU Review Board, the CONNLINET Council, and the State Advisory Committee on Libraries, into a new

advisory body to the State Library Board: the Advisory Council on Library Planning and Development (ACLPD). The mission of the ACLPD is to provide the State Library Board and staff with advice, perspective, and communication from the library community on matters relating to the Library's various statewide program and service responsibilities. Council membership consists of one representative from each of the following interest areas: small public libraries, medium public libraries, large public libraries, CLSU's, libraries participating in shared automated systems, the Connecticut Library Association, special libraries, academic libraries, school library media centers, institution libraries, libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped, the Department of Education, the Department of Higher Education, and six users of libraries.

The ACLPD Council established a task force to develop recommended standards for principal public libraries in 1991. The six-member task force began its work in March of 1992 and produced a first draft in July 1993. Following four public hearings, the final document was approved by the full Council in November 1993 and by the State Library Board. The "Minimum Standards for Connecticut Principal Public Libraries" provides guidance to library planners in eleven areas: structure and governance; administration; finance; personnel; materials; service; users and usage; community relations; access; resource sharing; and physical facilities.

Another very successful project that evolved from discussions at the "Towards the Year 2000" retreat is the statewide catalog, reQuest, which unifies the catalog records of more than 340 public, school, academic and special libraries. ReQuest is currently produced three times a year on five CD-ROM's. It includes more than 14 million holdings records and is searchable at nearly 300 libraries in the state. In 1994-1995, 25 libraries participated in a pilot project to test and demonstrate the potential value of converting reQuest from CD-ROM to an on-line environment. At the conclusion of the pilot, an evaluation committee completed a comprehensive evaluation of the project. After reviewing the evaluation, the reQuest Executive Committee recommended that the State Library pursue an on-line union database system to include interlibrary loan, public access catalogs, patron-based interlibrary loan, and cataloging functions.

In 1995, the General Assembly passed Public Act 95-234 which charges the State Library and the Department of Education to work together to plan and develop a Connecticut Library Network (CLN) that would link public, school and academic libraries and municipal offices, and to give all state citizens equal access to the information resources they need. The Connecticut Library Network will offer such services as an on-line statewide library catalog, a statewide telecommunications network and access to the Internet and other local, state or national databases. It is anticipated that the state legislature will appropriate funds to allow libraries to participate in this program. An RFP to create an on-line statewide bibliographic database was issued in February 1997. The CLN governing board has begun to define CLN and its role, and Connecticut State Library staff continue building collaborative bonds with the Departments of Education and Higher Education and coordinating their networking and technology programs to assure equitable access for children to networked information resources through both school and public library facilities.

In addition to working toward a statewide electronic network, the State Library is creating a computer training laboratory at its facility in Middletown that will offer library personnel the opportunities to gain the skills they need to use these new resources effectively. The lab and its staff will be available to all libraries and library groups in the state for technology training.

Concurrent with the development of the CLN have been the activities of the Legislative Task Force on Educational Telecommunications and the Joint Committee on Educational Technology (JCET), which have each submitted proposals to the state legislature. The CLN is an integral part of the JCET's "1998-1999 Legislative Platform." The unprecedented nature of the level of collaboration among the agencies involved in these initiatives has led to strong support for drafting a single bill supporting the networking and technology initiatives of the Departments of Education and Higher Education, and the State Library/CLN.

The Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services held in 1990 recommended that the Governor establish a Blue Ribbon Commission of the Future of the Library. That Commission was appointed in 1993, and its thirty-two designated representatives convened in January 1994. They organized themselves into three work groups: networking and technology; structure and governance; and funding. Among the recommendations in the Commission's final report, which it issued in April 1996, was strong support for the development of the Connecticut Library Network; the establishment of standards for an on-line statewide information database; projects that foster cooperation among all types of libraries to ensure equitable access to information delivery; and funding to ensure full access to library services and resources by all citizens of Connecticut, including those who are socially, economically, or otherwise disadvantaged. The Commission also endorsed the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Educational Technology.

A recent project that further demonstrates the cooperative spirit within the library and education communities in Connecticut was ConneCT96. The State Library worked with the Citizens for Connecticut's Children and Youth, the local telephone company, and many volunteers to provide participating schools and public libraries with the wiring and modems needed to connect them to the Internet. More than half of Connecticut's 195 public libraries and more than two-thirds of the 1,000 K-12 schools participated. While ConneCT96 offered only a limited number of hookups in each school and library, and many of the participating schools are not yet on-line or have only limited access, the project was a significant step toward bringing all schools and public libraries up to speed in information and educational technology. ConneCT96's successor, ConneCT2000, will continue to assist schools and public libraries to connect to and use Internet resources.

The LSTA Planning Process

To participate in the state grant program of the federal Library Services and Technology Act, Connecticut is required to prepare a Five-Year State Plan for submission to the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The LSTA legislation focuses on two priorities:

Information access through technology:

- electronic linkages among libraries;
- electronically linking libraries with education, social, or information services;
- assisting libraries in accessing information through electronic networks;
- encouraging libraries in different areas and different types of libraries to establish consortia and share resources;
- funding for libraries to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunications technologies.

and Information empowerment through special services:

- persons having difficulty using a library;
- underserved urban and rural communities;
- children in poverty.

Connecticut's plan establishes goals and objectives for the State consistent with the purposes of LSTA, describes the activities that will meet those goals, and describes the procedures that have been and will be used to involve libraries and library users throughout the state in LSTA related decisions. It also presents the procedures the State Library will use to administer the program and evaluate the success of Connecticut's LSTA activities.

The plan will be reviewed annually by the State Advisory Council for Library and Development and revised as appropriate. At its meeting in December 1996, the Council affirmed the importance of securing broad library community participation in the development of the new federal library program for Connecticut. They authorized the establishment of a committee to determine the planning process and to draft the plan. Members of the committee included the president of the Friends of Connecticut Libraries; the State Department of Education school library media consultant; the director of a health center library; four public library directors, each of whom represents a different geographical area of the state and a different service population; and two members of the State Library development office.

The committee prepared a two part survey form which was sent to more than 800 librarians and library supporters. The survey asked respondents to rank the programs currently funded in Connecticut by LSCA and to suggest other areas which LSTA funds might be used. The second part of the survey asked nine open ended questions. The committee used the results of the survey to develop Connecticut's goals and priorities for LSTA. The committee also established a listserv to encourage public discussion of LSTA issues and to channel information back to the library community.

Public hearings will be held from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on May 19th at the Southbury Public Library and on May 22nd at the Willimantic Library Service Center. The Plan will be submitted to the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development on June 18th and to the State Library Board on July 28th.

Administration and Evaluation

The State Library will work with the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development to establish appropriate grant programs that will foster electronic linkages among libraries of varying types and with other social and educational agencies and encourage libraries to develop programs and information services targeted to people with disabilities, limited functional literacy, people of diverse backgrounds, and the underserved in urban and rural communities.

The success of prior projects that included libraries working not only with each other but with other public and private entities with convergent goals has clearly demonstrated the value of actively seeking partnerships beyond the library community. The State Library will encourage all grant applicants to look at the possibilities of linking to other agencies when appropriate.

The Director of the Division of Library Development of the Connecticut State Library has had responsibility for the administration of the LSCA program in Connecticut and will continue in that role with LSTA. Carryover LSCA funds from FY1997 will be used for LSTA programs and expenditures of carryover funds will be consistent with LSTA goals. Division staff will monitor grants as appropriate and report to the Director of Library Development. Division staff will also make reports and provide information to the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services as required to determine the extent to which LSTA funds have been effective in carrying out the purpose of LSTA.

The State Library Grants Management office has developed procedures to inform grantees of their responsibilities to provide evaluative information both during the grant period and after the grant is completed. That office maintains complete files on all grants and ensures that grantees complete and file all required documentation.

The State Library has worked closely with the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development. The library will continue to present LSTA budget and activities plans to the Council for approval before presenting them to the State Library Board, as well as calling upon the Council to evaluate those activities.

LSTA Gpals

Goal 1: Provide the citizens of Connecticut access to information and education resources through a statewide library network.

Public Act 95-234 also authorized the State Library to plan and develop a Connecticut Library Network (CLN) which will link all school, public and academic libraries in Connecticut. The purpose of the network is to: assure citizen access to information resources; assure equity of access for all citizens, especially children; enhance resource-sharing; ensure accessibility to electronic information resources; and improve interlibrary communication. The functions of the network include an on-line statewide library database, access to on-line cataloging, access to the Internet, e-mail and a statewide interlibrary loan system.

Objective: Increase information resources available to Connecticut's libraries by supporting the development and implementation of the Connecticut Library Network (CLN).

Activity: Support projects identified by the CLN Governing Board to implement and enhance the Connecticut Library Network.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on vendor performance, the number of libraries participating, and the evaluation of services from participating libraries.

Activity: Negotiate, manage and support a statewide discount for access to selected databases to allow more libraries access to information databases on a more equitable basis.

Evaluation: The CLN Board will establish criteria for determining the success of establishing a state-wide discount for access to electronic databases.

Activity: Support electronic linkages to other state agency databases.

Evaluation: An evaluation will be based on the number of cooperative arrangements with other state agencies for electronic linkages and the availability of these linkages in local libraries.

Objective: Ensure all libraries have the technological capacity to access information resources through electronic networks.

Activity: Establish a grant program for capital expenditures.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of libraries with the technological capacity to access the Internet and other electronic networks. Grant recipients also will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Provide libraries with technical assistance related to the CLN, Internet, LANs and general automation issues.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the quantity and quality of technical assistance provided through additional staff or grant programs.

Objective: Improve document delivery to ensure Connecticut citizens timely access to library resources.

Activity: Support and enhance the Connecticar document delivery system.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of delivery stops per week, turnaround time for the delivery of materials, and percentage of scheduled and completed stops. An annual survey of customer satisfaction will be conducted.

Activity: Investigate, evaluate and implement, if appropriate, alternatives for improved document delivery including electronic methods.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on completion of an evaluation of alternative delivery methods

Goal 2: Ensure all children in Connecticut have access to quality library services.

Objective: Improve library service to children (birth to 17) in poverty or having difficulty using the library.

Activity: Establish grant programs for libraries addressing the special needs of children in poverty.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Establish grant programs for outreach programs for children.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Identify, recognize or create exemplary model programs for children in poverty. Information on such projects will be shared with the Connecticut Library community.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the successful sharing of programs to the library community.

Grant recipients also will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Support collection development at Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers to support libraries' outreach programs to children.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of items purchased to support libraries outreach programs to children. Use statistics for these materials will also be analyzed.

Goal 3: Improve the ability of library personnel, trustees and related groups to provide excellent library service to the citizens of Connecticut.

In 1993 a Statewide Continuing Education Planning Committee was established by the State Library. The Committee included representatives from various state library groups providing continuing education opportunities, including the Connecticut State Library, the Connecticut Library Association, the Cooperating Library Service Units, the Connecticut Educational Media Association, the Connecticut Association of Health Science Libraries, the Connecticut Valley Chapter of the Special Library Association, Southern Connecticut State University School of Library Science and the Library Technology Program at Three Rivers Community Technical College. The purpose of the Committee is to coordinate and develop continuing education activities for librarians, library staff and trustees of all types of libraries on a statewide basis by:

- formalizing the annual planning process for ongoing continuing education and developing a meaningful evaluation procedure for all continuing education activities;
- conducting needs assessment activities within the library community to determine and prioritize training topics;
- sharing information among groups that provide continuing education events and recommending topics and formats;
- developing an effective marketing program to promote continuing education activities;
- producing and distributing a continuing education catalog; and
- investigating new technologies for providing continuing education to the widest possible audience.

1994 the Committee conducted a needs assessment through regional focus groups. In 1996 a follow-up needs assessment was conducted through a touch-screen survey conducted during the Connecticut Library Association annual conference. The Connecticut State Library maintains a close working relationship with the Friends of Connecticut Libraries and the Association of Connecticut Library Boards and supports continuing education for these organizations.

Objective: Develop, implement and evaluate a plan for continuing education.

Activity: The Statewide Continuing Education Planning Committee will conduct, annual surveys to identify technological and other continuing education needs of Connecticut library community. The Committee will then establish priorities for continuing education for the coming year.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on completion of a survey and the number of priorities met in the year following the survey.

Activity: Offer continuing education opportunities or grants, coordinated by the Continuing Education Planning Committee.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of programs offered, the number of library staff trained, and an analysis of evaluation forms completed by participants.

Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Annually evaluate results of continuing education for meeting the needs of Connecticut libraries.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on completion of an annual evaluation of continuing education.

Objective: Ensure that library staff are fully able to utilize current and new technologies. Activity:

Support the technology training laboratory at the Middletown Library Service Center which will be available to all libraries, consortia, and library groups for technology training.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on completion of the laboratory, the number of programs offered, the attendance at training sessions and an analysis of evaluation forms completed by attendees.

Activity: Support professional development and training materials for library staff, trustees and Friends through the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of materials purchased and an analysis of circulation statistics.

Goal 4: Enhance access to library services for individuals having difficulty using the library.

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is a network library of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress. The Library provides free mail loan of recorded and Braille books and magazines and necessary playback equipment to eligible state residents unable to read conventional print because of a visual or physical disability.

Objective: Expand library services to individuals with disabilities.

Activity: Increase awareness and access to adaptive and assistive technologies.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the development of programs designed to increase awareness of library staff to such technologies, the number of library staff attending and an analysis of evaluation forms.

Activity: Establish grant programs for improved access to information resources.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Support existing services through the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH).

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of clients served, the percentage increase in clients, and on circulation statistics.

Activity: Develop outreach programs to libraries to increase the use of LBPH.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on an increase in the number of clients using LBPH services.

Activity: Develop audio tape and large print collections at the Middletown and Willimantic Library Service Centers.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of items purchased and the circulation statistics for these items.

Activity: Develop a strategy for determining and improving use of local libraries by individuals with disabilities.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on development of a study or plan to improve use.

Objective: Improve literacy among adults, children and families.

Activity: Establish grant programs for family literacy programs to underserved populations.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Goal 5: Improve access to quality library materials, services or programs for populations in economically distressed or culturally diverse communities.

According to the 1990 census, 6.8% of Connecticut residents have income below the poverty line. The poverty level for twelve communities in Connecticut is over 10%. Five communities have a poverty level over 15%.

Objective: Increase access to library materials or services for populations in economically distressed communities and underserved populations.

Activity: Establish grant program for innovative projects. For example: Cooperative collection development grants to meet the needs of targeted populations.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Establish grant programs based on annually determined priorities for the acquisition of services and/or materials. For example: Grants for non-English language materials and service.

Evaluation: Grant recipients will be required to evaluate the effectiveness of their grant project in meeting the objectives established in the grant application. The Connecticut State Library will analyze grant evaluations by category to provide a statewide evaluation.

Activity: Provide a range of professional consulting services to library staff, trustees, and Friends, especially those in target areas, to help them determine and respond to evolving information needs of their constituents.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on an annual evaluation of the provision of consulting services to libraries will be conducted.

Activity: Support staff and collection development at the Willimantic and Middletown Library Service Centers.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the number of libraries from economically distressed communities using the collections of the service centers and the volume of circulation to these libraries.

Activity: Publicize the Library Service Centers' services to libraries, especially those in target areas.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on development of a program of publicity targeted to these libraries.

Activity: Survey current users of Library Service Centers to determine their changing requirements for materials and services.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on completion and evaluation of the survey.

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